

VZCZCXRO5839
PP RUEHBC RUEHDA RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHGB #0411 0431222
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 121222Z FEB 08
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5695
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY

UNCLAS BAGHDAD 000411

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: NINEWA: PRT EMERGENCY PLANNING EFFORTS BEAR FRUIT
WITH PROVINCIAL INITIATIVE

This is a Ninewa Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) message.

Civic Leaders Working Together
for Emergency Preparedness

¶1. (U) After months of hard work to raise the profile of emergency preparedness among government officials in Ninewa, the PRT's efforts paid off January 23 when a large group of provincial and local officials, led by Provincial Governor Duraid Kashmoula, convened to outline the initial steps for an improved emergency action plan for Ninewa province. Thanks to USAID, the PRT has twice brought in a senior consultant on emergency preparedness to assess the situation in the province and to work with the Iraqi civil servants responsible in the event of a serious incident, such as a flood, a large-scale fire or a city-wide terrorist attack, and we have linked this with a requested ongoing program of support for the province in this critical area.

Governor Gives Full Support

¶2. (U) Governor Kashmoula publicly empowered the provincial fire chief, BG Mohammad Suleiman, to lead the effort to create a comprehensive emergency action plan. Over 50 officials, including all the Mayors in the Tigris river valley, district police chiefs, relevant Provincial Directors General, and the Ninewa Civil Defense Director, attended the January 23 meeting and took an active participatory role in forward planning. At the meeting, the Governor also pledged his strong support for emergency planning in the province.

Table-Top Exercise in February

¶3. (U) The meeting concluded with an agreement to conduct a formal "table-top exercise" in February with all important stakeholders. The committee also agreed to meet on a monthly basis to address emergency planning and civil defense needs for Ninewa.

Comment

¶4. (U) It is promising that provincial officials across agency lines have taken this first vital step in meeting the key provincial goal of a strong emergency management plan. The PRT will continue to work closely with the committee to improve on its plan, and will provide the technical expertise needed to move the plan forward, including by improving the early-warning system of an imminent threat to the population. The PRT will continue to help the committee put in a place a sound, workable plan that will really make a difference in the event of a major emergency.
CROCKER